# PROFILE



## SOMNAMBULISTIC CE[redacted]

IN one form or another, the dream of a United States of Europe has existed in the minds of statesmen and poets for a long, long time. In the fourteenth century, both Pierre Dubois, in "De Recuperatione Terrae Sanctae," and Dante Alighieri, in "De Monarchia," put forth proposals for the peaceful unification of Europe, and every few years thereafter for a couple of centuries someone or other came up with a similar plan. As it happened, all these schemes were torpedoed by the Reformation, which divided Europe into two warring camps, yet even while the Catholics and the Protestants were fighting it out in the Thirty Years' War, the vision was revived—by the Duc de Sully, the friend of King Henri IV of France—and not long afterward it was taken up by the Quakers in England. In 1692, William Penn wrote his "Essay Towards the Present and Future Peace of Europe," and in 1710 a less well-known Quaker named John Bellers published "Some Reasons for an European State." Many great men of the eighteenth century considered themselves primarily Europeans and only secondarily Frenchmen or Englishmen or Germans; Montesquieu, for example, called Europe "a state consisting of several provinces." Not much later, George Washington predicted that one day a United States of Europe would be founded. Napoleon, who had tried in his fashion to unite Europe, wrote toward the end of his life that Europe must be united "through an indissoluble federative union."

After 1848—the year of revolution and counter-revolution throughout Europe—the notion of unification was forgotten by almost everyone except a few literary men and philosophers, among them Lamartine, Béranger, Hugo, and Nietzsche. Instead, the big powers formed limited alliances, mostly for military purposes, which, far from bringing Europe together, tore it apart in the First World War. Then, in the mid-twenties, Count Richard Coudenhove-Kalergi, a half-Austrian, half-Japanese writer and teacher, momentarily electrified Europe with his projected Paneuropa, a scheme for a loosely knit European federation. The first Paneuropa Congress, held in Vienna in 1926, was attended by almost all the great European statesmen of the time (Briand's *chef de cabinet*, Alexis Léger, who last year, under his pen name, Saint-John Perse, was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, wrote the first Paneuropa program), but before things could get beyond the talking stage, Hitler arrived on the scene. Like Napoleon, he wanted his own kind of united Europe, and, for a while, he got it. After the Second World War, the Europeans, partly as a result of prodding by the United States, again began promoting federal schemes—the Coal and Steel Community, the Inner Six, the Outer Seven, and so on. In the eyes of one European, however, these projects are far too fragmentary and timid. He is Otto Molden, a visionary from Vienna, who generally likes to concentrate on one big idea at a time.

*Otto Molden*

Molden, a tall, dark-haired man of forty-three, with penetrating eyes, a suitably hypnotic manner, a powerful stride, and a deep voice, is a full-time political prophet who does something about his prophecies. His career started when he was a boy, but his first big success did not come until the chaotic summer days of 1945, when Austria, under the four-power occupation, was suffering from poverty and hunger. Parents were looking for their children, and lost children were looking for a place to sleep. The people needed food and clothes, but Molden decided they needed ideas and intellectual stimulation as well, so he went to the secluded Tyrolian village of Alpbach and founded something he called the European Forum, as "a practical contribution toward a rejuvenation of the intellectual life of Europe." The forum—a program of lectures, seminars, and round-table discussions on European science, culture, and politics—has since been held in Alpbach for three weeks every summer. Its first meeting, which started on August 25, 1945, was attended by about eighty people—scholars, writers, [illegible] thirteen thousand people, from thirty-four countries, have [illegible] and have returned home with new ideas about practically everything under the sun. The participants have included Nobel Prize winners and Cabinet ministers, and it is not too much to say that Alpbach has livened up European intellectual life—or, as Molden puts it, "Alpbach has helped create the educated, Europe-minded, tolerant *honnête homme* of the twentieth century—the sort of man who is equipped to take part in the building of a rejuvenated Europe."

Rejuvenation was Molden's big idea during the first years of Alpbach. Then he fell under the spell of a bigger idea, one that had preoccupied him off and on since childhood—the unification of Europe, and not just of Western Europe, though it was only there that a start could be made. The word "rejuvenation" has not been dropped from Molden's vocabulary, though; on the contrary, it is on his lips a good deal of the time and has come for him to be something of a synonym for "unification." At any rate, since early 1958, cutting down on his duties at Alpbach, he has devoted most of his time to the goal of unification, travelling all over the free part of the Continent and making more or less the same speech—to large groups, to small ones, or simply to a handful of people.

"Time is running out fast," he said recently in one such speech. "Our only hope of preserving European freedom and civilization is to unite Europe, from the North Cape to Crete, from Bucharest to Lisbon. We must create a European federal superstate, with a common President, a common government, a common army, a common currency, and a common foreign policy. That is, member states will sacrifice control of everything except their own social and cultural life. Our greatest difficulty will be to convince the free peoples of Europe that they must give up their na-